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increase the number of known nebulae; but the discovery of new nebulae, all of which would necessarily be faint, seems to be much less important than the gain of further information about nebulae already known. For this reason no search has been made for new objects, though a catalogue will be made in due time of those which have been found in the course of other investigations.

J. E. K.

COMET NOTES.

Since its rediscovery by Mr. PERRINE on the morning of June 11th,* HOLMES's Comet has been regularly observed here, but, so far as is known at present, it has not been seen elsewhere. The rediscovery position enabled Mr. ZWIERS to correct his search ephemeris very satisfactorily. Five observations secured by the writer between August 11th and September 9th give average residuals of only $+0.66$ in R. A. and $+9''.2$ in Decl. (O. — C.) to the revised ephemeris.

The comet on the last-named date was still very faint, not as bright as a fourteenth-magnitude star, and showed only a slight central condensation, no true nucleus. Unless it exhibits some of the unexpected light changes that made its former apparition so remarkable, it is likely to remain beyond the reach of all but the most powerful telescopes.

Comet Tempel II has also been observed regularly here since its rediscovery on May 6th of the present year. At first very faint, it became bright enough to be an easy object in a small telescope in the latter part of July. It is now losing light rapidly; but on the night of September 26th it was still readily visible in the $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch finder of the 12-inch telescope, being about as bright as a tenth-magnitude star. The nucleus, though now quite faint, — about thirteenth-magnitude — is still clearly marked. The comet reached its greatest southern Declination about the 11th of September, and is now moving north and east. It will, therefore, remain in good position for observation for some months to come.

R. G. AITKEN.

September 27, 1899.

NOTE ON THE SEEING AT MT. HAMILTON.

While in the East, during the present summer, I met several astronomers who referred to the good seeing at Mt. Hamilton, as

* See these *Publications*, No. 68, p. 134.

if it were essentially dependent upon the ocean fogs coming in at a lower altitude than the Observatory and by covering the surrounding country so as to keep down the radiation from the valleys and cañons about us, producing that equality of atmospheric conditions which accompanies good seeing.

My experience is somewhat at variance with this idea. The presence of fogs over the valleys does not appear to be a very important factor in the case. The seeing is sometimes good and sometimes bad when the fog is present, and it is sometimes good and sometimes bad when it is absent. On some of the finest nights that I have known there has been no fog in sight. The conditions which give rise to our good seeing must be sought in other causes, probably in the prevailing meteorological characteristics of this region.

W. J. HUSSEY.

COMET 1898 VII (CODDINGTON).

This comet has now been under observation at the Lick Observatory from June 11, 1898, to September 7, 1899, or about fifteen months. During this period it has described a heliocentric arc of more than 150 degrees. At the time of the last observation it was approximately 4.46 astronomical units, or 412,000,000 miles from the Sun. It was also about the same distance from the Earth. Its brightness was estimated at fifteenth magnitude.

E. F. CODDINGTON.